

NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILD CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL (NH CCAC)

FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR CHILD CARE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

The New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council, originally enacted in 1965 (RSA 126A: 17; revised in 1999) is charged with supporting the development of quality, affordable child care statewide. The Council advises the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services on issues and needs regarding child care services and communicates with the Governor and Commissioner of the Department of Education on issues related to child care.

It is in fulfilling all of these responsibilities that the following five year plan has been developed.

To improve child care services that support children and families in New Hampshire, the anticipated outcomes of the five year plan include:

- Policy initiatives driven to improve quality child care services, access, and affordability;
- Increased retention of qualified child care professionals;
- Appropriate compensation and benefits for well-trained child care professionals;
- Increased professionalism and comprehensive professional development opportunities for the child care industry;
- An expanded quality rating system that recognizes quality programs for children and promotes higher standards for teachers and programs;
- A comprehensive system to collect and analyze data in order to improve quality child care in New Hampshire;
- Strong relationships with business community with increased understanding between the link of a healthy workforce and quality child care.

To Improve Child Care Services That Support Families and Children the following Goals and Strategies are proposed:

GOAL I - Develop Adequate, Diversified Financial Resources.

- A. Research and define the real cost of providing quality child care in the state of NH.
- B. Develop and implement strategies to improve salary compensation and benefits.
- C. Initiate relationships with business community to increase their investment in child care.
- D. Create a Quality Child Care Services Fund based on a set % of gross revenue of the child care industry in New Hampshire.
- E. Maintain and expand public dollars directed to quality child care services to increase access for low income families and provide child care assistance to all income eligible families.
- F. Maximize effective use of Child Care Development Funds within federal guidelines.
- G. Secure funding from NH-based foundations to support key child care initiatives.

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GOAL II - Increase Public Awareness for the Value of Quality Child Care Services

- A. Create a shared identity among professionals in child care industry with representation from the complete continuum of child care services, professional disciplines, employers, and families.
- B. Collect, interpret and present data to document the importance of quality child care services in NH.
- C. Create a public awareness campaign about the value of quality child care services.
- D. Increase ability and willingness of members of the child care industry and families served to become involved in public planning, policy development, and legislative action.
- E. Increase the capacity for child care services to develop relationships with other social service providers and schools that will strengthen the public perception of the child care industry.

GOAL III - Continue to Develop the Professionalism and Standards of the Field.

- A. Support, enhance, and expand comprehensive Quality Rating System (QRS).
- B. Strengthen and support promotion of Early Learning Guidelines (ELG).
- C. Strengthen and support promotion of NH Early Childhood Professional Development System.
- D. Collaborate with providers to provide professional development opportunities for teachers that promote quality child care services for families.
- E. Expand opportunities for continued education for providers and teachers.
- F. Establish a mentoring system for child care providers to improve classroom practice, foster ongoing professional development, reduce turnover, and increase retention of staff.
- G. Develop and implement an outreach initiative designed to encourage child care professionals to join or become involved with public planning, resources management and professional organizations.
- H. Strengthen and expand opportunities for child care providers to support and engage families

GOAL IV - Strengthen the Infrastructure and Capacity to Support Quality Child Care in New Hampshire.

- A. Maximize the potential resources of the NH Child Care Advisory Council membership in addressing key issues related to child care services.
- B. Review the role and responsibilities of the NH Child Care Advisory Council.
- C. Create and develop partnerships and collaborations that strengthen the delivery of child care in NH.
- D. Re-enact Kid's Cabinet with Governor to focus on issues related to children and youth.

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NH CCAC Five Year Plan Steering Committee Members
March-December 2006

Tessa McDonnell, Chair

Dean of Learner Services
Granite State College, USNH

Jackie Cowell

Executive Director
Early Learning New Hampshire

Mary Stuart Gile

State Representative
NH House of Representatives

Joan Izen

PTAN Project Director
PTAN/SERESC

Margaret Leitch Copeland (Steering Committee Member March – August)

Former Administrator DHHS Child Development Bureau

Carol Michael

Program Support Services Regional Consultant
Plus Time New Hampshire
Former Executive Director Sandwich Children's Center.

Deidre O'Hare

Director CCR&R
Nashua Area CCR&R

Lara Quiroga

Program Manager for Education and Professional Development
VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center

Ellen Wheatley (Steering Committee Member August-December)

Child Development Bureau Administrator/Head Start Collaboration Project
Department of Health & Human Services

Facilitators

Carolyn Benthien

Benthien Associates

Kirsten Scobie

NPCB Consulting

Consultants

Valerie Krajec (September-December)

Technical Assistance Specialist
National Child Care Information Center

Anne Mitchell (February-August)

President National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Child Care Information Center